

RECYCLED PRODUCTS FACT SHEET:

Compost and Mulch



All State entities are required by 50-5-60.4 to give preference to compost and mulch made from organic material that is recovered from Georgia's non-hazardous waste stream for all land maintenance and land development activities.

What is compost and mulch?

Compost is a valuable soil amendment that is produced from composting, the decomposition of organic materials such as yard trimmings, food scraps, and nitrogen-rich animal waste. Composting is an age-old process that returns vital nutrients to the soil, nutrients that we so often deplete through land development and planting.

Mulch is a more decorative soil surface cover that is made from mechanically chipping or shredding woody debris, which has been diverted from the landfill. It does not go through the complete decomposition process that compost does.

It has been proven that the use of compost:

- Improves soil porosity for clay soils
- Improves water retention for sandy soils
- Makes soil more resistant to disease
- Reduces pests and the need for pesticides
- Reduces erosion
- Suppresses weeds
- Enhances storage and slow release of nutrients

It has been proven that the use of mulch:

- Reduces erosion
- Suppresses weeds
- Improves water retention

How to use compost and mulch:

Compost is used in combination with existing soil, just as any other soil amendment. For typical landscaping purposes, 2- to 3-inches of compost should be incorporated with the top 6-inches of existing soil. Product-specific directions may accompany delivery. Mulch should be incorporated into plant beds or around trees in 1- to 2-inch thick layers.